# Spillover Effects in Europe – a new research front

*Jonathan Vickery*
*Centre for Cultural Policy Studies, University of Warwick,*
*United Kingdom*
*J.P.Vickery@warwick.ac.uk*

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## ABSTRACT

Arts and cultural organisations all across Europe are continually faced with demands to justify their receipt of public funding, and increasingly under pressure to align their interests with funders or government sponsors. A new research project on "creative and cultural spillover" attempts to devise a new language and perhaps a new sense of mission for cultural agents. Based on a survey of existing research, it observes how culture and the arts have always played a significant social and economic function. However, it further asserts that reference to a EU scale policy framework should motivate cultural sectors (perhaps in alliance with the creative industries) to actively generate "spillover" within broader innovation and sustainability frameworks. This short article presents the project's rationale and central concerns, and underlines its significance to the cultural policy research community (but does not preempt the imminent publication of a Final Report).

## Introduction

A significant new subject has emerged for cultural policy research – creative and cultural spillover. The term "spillover" has a complex and diffuse history, and is related to the many cultural policy debates of the last few decades on knowledge transfer, social impact, public value, and more recently, cultural value (ACE, 2014)[1]. In other words, it addresses the ways in which arts and cultural activities and organisations possess knowledge, capabilities and capital that can generate forms of value or impact beyond their own cultural orbit or beyond the cultural "sector" itself (Landry, 2000; Frontier Economics, 2007; BOP, 2013). Of course, terms like "value" and "impact" require critical investigation.

The project I will cite below is asking questions on the definitional, theoretical and methodological effectiveness of recent or current research, much of it of significance beyond its immediate context of inquiry (as a random example: Garcia, Melville & Cox, 2010; Wedemeier, 2010; Tafel-Villa et al, 2011; Lazzeretti, 2012; Slach & Boruta, 2012; Dümcke & Gnedovsky, 2013; Bakshi, Lee & Mateos-Garcia, 2014). It intends to define spillover in a way that will have a direct purchase on governmental strategies for public investment and more generally on the financial politics of culture and cultural governance, particularly in an age where "austerity" has become an acceptable option for national economic strategy across the European continent (Pratt, 2012)[2].

A number of significant publications and research projects on issues directly pertaining to spillover have recently been conducted, including the three-year EU URBACT Thematic Network "Creative SpIN"[3]. One just completing its first phase has been provisionally entitled "Preliminary Evidence of Spillover Effects in Europe", the origins of which is the CATALYSE project, an EU-funded collaboration between the Forum d'Avignon, the european centre for creative economy (ecce), and Bilbao Metropoli-30. CATALYSE, directed by Bernd Fesel, lasted from March 2013 to May 2014 and featured a student masterclass with students from Dortmund University and Warwick University. Their task was to explore potential models for defining and measuring "spillover effects", and from this a first issue of a new publication series appeared – "to be debated: *spillover*" – followed by a high profile presentation at the European Culture Forum (autumn 2013)[4]. Pan-European publicity and networking then motivated renowned partners from Germany, UK, Ireland and the Netherlands to convene and devise a plan for a Europe-wide, evidence-based research project on spillover effects. The partners were: european centre for creative economy (ecce), Arts Council England, Arts Council of Ireland, Creative England, and the European Cultural Foundation[5]. The Tom Fleming Cultural Consultancy were commissioned to manage this initial exploratory research, the result of which is a Final Report, both on the ecce website and the new open Wiki space[6]. Through the Wiki, this project now invites a Europe-wide dialogue, and where hitherto the research has largely (but not exclusively) involved policy and research documents in the English language (albeit 98 documents from 17 European countries), the Wiki invites contributions from all languages.

> "THE DEFINED OBJECT OF RESEARCH ('CREATIVE AND CULTURAL SPILLOVER') IS AN OPEN QUESTION: SPILLOVER MAY INVOLVE CULTURAL PRODUCTS, PROJECTS, PROCESSES, TECHNIQUES".

[1] See, for example, the recent Report by the Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value, available at: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/research/warwickcommission/futureculture/finalreport/

[2] In March 2015, as part of the Latvian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, a high level conference was held on "Cultural and creative crossovers: partnering culture with other sectors to maximize creativity, growth and innovation" (11-12 March, the National Library of Latvia).

[3] See "Creative SpIN – Creative Spillovers for Innovation. URBACT II Thematic Network Baseline Study" (Creative SpIN, 2012). The EU URBACT Thematic Network "Creative SpIN", whose study is contextualized by urban development, published its Final Report in June 2015: http://urbact.eu/library?f%5B0%5D=field_network_reference_multiple%3A964

[4] "to be debated: *spillover"* (Dortmund: ecce) is available at: http://www.e-c-c-e.de/en/publications/

[5] Individual Research Partners include Kaisa Schmidt-Thomé, Aalto University; Annick Schramme, Competence Center Creative Industries, Antwerp Management School; Ellen Aslaksen and Marianne Berger, Arts Council of Norway; Cristina Ortega and Fernando Bayón, University of Deusto, Bilbao; Pablo Rossello and Lynsey Smith, Creative Economy, British Council, UK; Lyudmila Petrova, Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication; Toni Attard, Arts Council Malta; Jonathan Vickery, Centre for Cultural Policy Studies, University of Warwick.

[6] The Final Report is available at: http://www.e-c-c-e.de/en/. The Wiki space is available at: https://ccspillovers.wikispaces.com

The project's Final Report is not simply a summary of findings, but an effective attempt to construct a conceptual framework that could be useful to other research projects. To this extent, the project itself remains in an exploratory stage, where the defined object of research ("creative and cultural spillover") is an open question: spillover may involve cultural products, projects, processes, techniques, and consist of communication, ideas and strategic models, brands and publicity, information and research, shared spaces and audiences, and many other things. How do we delineate between all of this, particularly in relation to established conceptions of the creative economy as a whole (The Work Foundation, 2007; Higgs, Cunningham & Bakshi, 2008; KEA, 2009 & 2015)? Terms like "synergies", "dynamics", "collaborative interactions", all seem appropriate, but without substantive and sustained empirical cases or (perhaps) longitudinal research, can we really make claims and devise strategic frameworks that will convince policymakers? Consequently, the project's theoretical framings and methodological orientations remain in a necessary stage of deliberation. Inputs to the Wiki, particularly from the ENCATC community, would be a significant contribution to the dialogue.

"FOR CURRENT EU POLICY DISCOURSE, THE CHALLENGE WILL BE TO UNDERSTAND THE BROADER SOCIO-ECONOMIC "FUNCTIONS" OF CULTURE AND CREATIVITY WHILE REMAINING COMMITTED TO A PRINCIPLE OF 'AUTONOMY'".

## EU policy contexts

A principle rationale of the project is not only to gather and acknowledge a vast range of related research relevant to spillover but, by way of advocacy, address some pressing issues for EU policymakers. These issues were most recently articulated in the Council of the European Union meeting for Education, Youth, Culture and Sport (May 2015), where spillover is referred to as "cultural and creative cross-over" (Council of the European Union, 2015). Cross-over is broadly defined as the "process of combining knowledge and skills specific to the cultural and creative sectors together with those of other sectors in order to generate innovative and intelligent solutions for today's societal challenges" (Council of the European Union, 2015: 2). As cited in the current EU Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018), the EU is looking to cultural and creative cross-overs "to stimulate innovation, economic sustainability and social inclusion [and to] examine and promote synergies between the cultural and creative sectors, on one hand, and other relevant sectors, on the other hand" (Council of the European Union: 10).

In the last few years, notwithstanding the limitations of the principle of subsidiarity and how member states cultural sectors remain strongly framed by national policy priorities, various EU cultural policy actors have been steadily making the case for the broader pan-national significance of culture and creative industries (European Commission, 2010b & 2012; Florida & Tinagli, 2004; KEA, 2006; Cooke & Lazzeretti, 2008). It has been obvious how "culture and creativity" have been implicated in broad urban developments – like creative clusters, creative quarters and the formation of the "new inner city" (Pratt, 2007 & 2008; Hutton, 2008; Mommaas, 2004) – , and how the creative industries contain all kinds of unrecognised productivity or potential (Miles & Green, 2008). But how can policies for culture be inserted into the policy discourse on sustainable development, European integration or social justice, or economic development?[7] This includes some urgent research and fresh evidence on the relevance of cultural production, organisation and agency, to industrial innovation, competitiveness and employment, urban development and social communities, furthering cross-sectoral cooperation and not least locating the significance of creativity for non-cultural industries.

And if all this sounds far too "instrumentalist" for the cultural policy researcher, the "intrinsic" value of culture and the arts is not ignored but regularly underlined, as in the European Commission's seminal European Agenda for Culture (European Commission, 2007). For current EU policy discourse, the challenge will be to understand the broader socio-economic "functions" of culture and creativity while remaining committed to a principle of "autonomy", even if policy theories of cultural autonomy are as lacking as policy theories of spillover. The trajectory of spillover research will then need to take into account the historically inscribed binaries that remain so embedded in our critical theories of European culture – art and commerce, culture and economy, creativity

[7] Some of these issues were recently broached at the pioneering COST Action IS1007 organised "International Transdisciplinary Conference: Cultures(s) in sustainable futures: theories, practices and policies" (6-8 May 2015, Helsinki).

and instrumentality, aesthetic engagement and consumer experience, and so on and on –, as well as the way European "culture" remains a nationally defined landscape of huge institutional "silos".

Spillover as a concept has an interesting if now overlooked history in this context. Neofunctionalist regionalism theory (Haas, 2004; Rosamond, 2005) is often attributed with opening the discussion on how spillover in Europe might be relevant to political and policy projects of understanding the potential of European integration. Furthering Jean Monnet's vision of a united Europe, the neofunctionalists identified how pan-European industrial innovation seems to develop by cross-border cooperation and a need for companies and industrial leaders to consult, work with and learn from their European colleagues, in all spheres of activity. For if basic patterns of national economic growth displayed necessary cross-border, productive and mutually-enhancing integration, the case for an "integrated" Europe becomes compelling. Significantly, neofunctionalists identified how patterns and forces of integration in some industries could generate multiple causal motions of integration in other industries, both within and across national borders. The momentum of such forces of integration was enhanced by what they called "spillover effects". Since then, the emergence of "Jacobs' spillovers" (1969) and "Porter's spillovers" (1990) have established the theoretical veracity of the term spillover, and with it a set of assumptions.

These assumptions have remained convincing, and are even more relevant today: firstly, there is a categorical distinction between the kinds of economic activity that generate only abstracted capital or profit (businesses that make money), and the kinds of economic activity that generate a broader-based wealth and increase the social and cultural life of a country or region; for real economic development is "place"-responsive or engaged with its socio-urban environment. Secondly, economic development possesses an intrinsic need for multi-disciplinary intellectual development (knowledge) within processes of industrial productivity and its standard requirements (of labour, technology, markets and so on). Thirdly, "social" networks of people are as important to economic development as supply chains or the kinds of networked relations necessary for material production. A retrospective reading of neofunctionalist theory would bring to mind how these three assumptions (in the context of Europe) would entail a consideration of the "politics" inherent in spillover – we need to consider how culture grows in power and meaning through crossing national cultural borders, boundaries, jurisdictions, and confronting conventional professional protocols. Spillover research will not simply take the form of an argument for more funding and building up the existing cultural sectors of nation states or cities. It must seek to demonstrate how through extending culture's capacity for knowledge and communication, place-based engagement, networks and cross-border interactions, more substantive phases of pan-European "development" can emerge (see by implication UNESCO, 2013).

Of course, spillover has played very conventional roles in economic growth, for R&D, B2B collaboration and partnerships, or even the routine production of knowledge for industrial application by university institutions (indeed see European Commission, 2010a; Carlino, 2001; Chapain, 2010; Acs, Audretsch & Lehmann, 2013). Moreover, "internal spillovers" are common in large multinational corporations, where interactions between different projects or departments can enhance value chains, among other things. And so perhaps because of the conventional industrial and economic orientation of spillover theory, it has not universally attracted the attention of cultural researchers. Yet, as I have noted above, the recent trajectory in EU cultural policy points towards the need for cultural sector development to position itself within larger policy fields. It needs to define shared interests between culture and economy, and can do so involving knowledge, places, networks and cross-border engagement.

Key policy statements, communications and reports over the last few years include the Council statement "European Agenda for Culture in a Globalising World" (European Commission, 2007), where citing the Lisbon Strategy for growth and jobs maintained that creative entrepreneurs and the cultural industries can play a significant role in European industrial and business innovation. The EC communication "Culture as a Catalyst for Creativity and Innovation" (2009), and the significant Green Paper "Unlocking the Potential of the Cultural and Creative Industries" (2010b), positioned culture and creativity as drivers of innovative capacity (of citizens, organisations, businesses and civil society associations) and called for EU Member States to facilitate more effective synergies between culture and other sectors of the economy. Yet there remains a philosophical tension within these areas of EU policymaking, a tension that can be defined in terms of the distinctions between US free market capitalism and a more traditional European social democracy. For example, 2009 was the "European Year of Creativity and Innovation", which produced the high profile Manifesto from the European Ambassadors for Creativity and Innovation, of which the American economist Richard Florida was one (Florida, 2002). Florida's work is highly influential and highly contested in equal measure, given its exclusive emphasis on positioning corporate profitability within public policies and favouring the virtues of the professional classes. The continued success of the European Capital of Culture, rather, is one example where industry, enterprise and urban development have co-joined to address a much broader social populace, generating different forms of "capital" and with it more diverse kinds of value, not privileging profit-making innovation firms. The RUHR.2010 in Essen, Germany, was particularly noted for its integration of arts, cultural heritage, and the creative industries on the level of regional and city-based public policy, and where "development" was defined in a way that

exceeded abstract (financial) conceptions of economic "growth" (ecce/Wirtschaftsförderung metropoleruhr, 2013; ecce/Forum D'Avignon, 2013).

The new EU cultural funding programme Creative Europe (2014-2020) is significant insofar as could help address a critical distinction between economic "growth" and a more sustainable "development", and do so by dissolving some ideological and institutional boundaries between art and enterprise, creative industries and other industries, and facilitating interconnections between traditional cultural policy objectives and the broader economic interests of other industry and enterprise policy programmes. The new Europe 2020 Strategy of "Innovation Union", identifies culture and creativity along with Europe's profound social diversity, as intrinsic to its macro-economic development. Yet, industry itself is rarely in a position to connect up the social and the economic, particularly within evolving frameworks of sustainability and integrated urban development. Integrated models of practice are required, and the success of such models will depend on the strategic frameworks of thought that are used, which are right now caught up in fatal binaries and sector-specific interests. How can we use culture as a means of framing a unified social and economic development, without, of course, compromising the historical basis of cultural autonomy as it has emerged in Europe? This is a task for cultural researchers and theorists.

"WE NEED A PAN-EUROPEAN ASSESSMENT OF THE MOST ADVANCED FORMS OF THOUGHT AND PRACTICE WITHIN ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION".

## Spillover research as a way forward

An immediate objection to spillover research is articulated by the NESTA publication, "A Manifesto for the Creative Economy": "(…) what happens when the knowledge cannot be codified? In what sense is it able to 'spill over'?" The report continues:

> Perhaps a more convincing economic argument for public funding of research in these cases would be to incentivise researchers to deploy the skills and competences they have developed through their research experience in other socially valuable contexts – including the private, public and third sectors (Bakhshi, Hargreaves & Mateos-Garcia, 2013: 56).

While referring specifically to knowledge spillovers, these statements raise two basic criticisms for spillover research in general. First, yes, our ability to "codify" knowledge is limited; but rather than abandon the task we must recognise the inherent limitations of cultural research and address these limits. One limitation emerges from the way cultural research attempts to find a certain "objectivity" (and thus credibility) by using the terminology of economics, or as the report's second statement implies, using skills and competences from spheres outside culture. While using the prevailing economics lexicon of policymakers is obviously practically necessary, and cultural research has always been multi-disciplinary, our research arguably needs to locate the capabilities and propensities of culture itself as a means of addressing the rank deficiencies of other, particularly the economic, realms (after all, where economics hanker after innovation, new ideas, and even creativity, it is not from economics they derive these concepts, but culture [see Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). This is particularly true with regard to the very concept of "economy" as of "public" in relation to "public investment". How so often the now hegemonic concept of "economy" is abstracted from society and culture, and what counts as public investment is defined according to abstract economic accounting – financial revenues out and returned – not according to the production of a spectrum of interrelated public goods and socially-available capital. Again, the EU "meta"-framework of sustainable development can be used here to critically expand our conceptions of the economics of culture (see European Commission/ DG Regio, 2011).

This further raises the issue that while European critical cultural research has generally been strong on the theoretical, critical and interpretative engagement with culture (and its socio-historical emergence), it has been traditionally weak on understanding the institutional and organizational conditions of its own practice. Academic critical research, moreover, still remains one-step removed from the now-developed realm of cultural management and enterprise research. This situation is manifest, among other places, in the oft outdated strategic management and organizational structures of many cultural institutions, which across Europe visibly remain embedded in older hierarchical and patriarchal models of European public bureaucracy. To find advanced, creative and truly collaborative,

organizational formations, we would do better looking to innovative corporations like Apple or Yahoo. Yet, across Europe new spaces and places – incubators, hubs, labs and art clubs, quarters and centres – have emerged, but whose reflexive, engaged, embedded and networked activities have not yet found a significant role in cultural policymaking.

So, how could spillover research empower cultural researchers (and organisations)? Following from the above, we need a pan-European assessment of the most advanced forms of thought and practice within artistic and cultural production – not just art products or cultural activities, but the enterprise, management and organizational dimensions of culture (the "processes" of culture from which industry, manufacturing and economic policy could learn)[8]. Culture invariably assumes a defensive posture, and in the last two decades has arguably changed more from the impact of private-corporate practices – brand, media and communications, marketing and new strategic management trends – than it has from the processes of production, engagement and experience that culture itself generates. Existing policy frameworks are still troubled by the structural distinctions between "culture and the arts" and "creative industries", and their delineations of the cultural "sector". This is also true of the innovative work being done by artists or cultural workers outside credible orbits of high culture – in mental health, immigration communities or refugees, religious communities or international development aid. In the last few decades the cultural realm has demonstrated a significant ability to innovate new forms of productive organisation, and this needs to be subject to the kinds of theoretical analysis and evaluation that will generate policy-directed models of practice.

Secondly, spillover research can uncover the social or urban ground of existing cultural production. Where we have been taught by micro-economics that culture is a "sector" and once-removed from social life, we need to recover a sense of culture's embeddedness and centrality to generating the social capital (social skills of literacy, dialogue, aspiration and connectivity). This can be done pro-actively through testing new strategies for networked institutional life, mobile art collections, collaborative events, socially engaged professional practice and a renewed emphasis on the cultural public realm. It can also work towards recovering the historic role of artists within European cities – demonstrated by the current EU culture programme-funded CreArt project (Network of Cities for Artistic Creation), coordinated by the Fundación Municipal de Cultura (Valladolid, Spain)[9]. The CreArt project, since 2010 has worked with municipal governments across Europe to demonstrate how mobile, transnational artistic production has always been intrinsic to the economic life of European cities, and can now re-stimulate new forms of cultural-economic activity. "Culture" and "economy" need not be hostile concepts.

Thirdly, spillover research is not just a matter of description and analysis (with a view to advocacy); it is a form of research that can provide material for experimental strategy, where cultural workers, artists, managers and entrepreneurs can develop the facility for generating spillover. This will involve a reassessment of the spectrum of competencies expected, or trained, in cultural workers, not least in the face of outstanding spillover activity visible in new global trends in technology hubs and innovation networks (see the work of Gilson Schwartz in Brazil)[10]. The potential range of functions for cultural activity within broader socio and economic realms remains unknown.

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[8] Notwithstanding significant work in this direction from Trans Europe Halles (TEH) and its members: http://teh.net/

[9] More information on CreArt (Network of Cities for Artistic Creation) can be found at: https://www.google.co.uk/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&espv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=cre%20art%20network

[10] See, for example: https://www.academia.edu/2483388/Knowledge_City_a_digital_knowware

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